MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF
THE USE, STOCKPILING, PRODUCTION AND
TRANSFER OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES
AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION

APLC/MSP.2/2000/INF.2
14 September 2000

Original: ENGLISH

Second Meeting
Geneva, 11-15 September 2000

NEW ZEALAND

OTTAWA CONVENTION SECOND MEETING OF PARTIES

ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES RETAINED FOR TRAINING

New Zealand has not retained live anti-personnel mines for training purposes as provided for under Article 3(1) of the Ottawa Convention. New Zealand does not, and has never, produced anti-personnel mines. The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) has found that its training needs can be met by using devices which range from locally manufactured plastic dummies, to purpose-built practice simulator devices.

Practice devices are specifically manufactured for training purposes and can be categorized into two major groups:

- models, which merely replicate various mine types; and
- simulators, which are used to simulate the actions of personnel activating a mine.

Replica mine models are used to train personnel in capabilities and characteristics of mines likely to be found in mission areas that NZDF personnel are deploying to.

Simulators are used in mission pre-deployment training to practice drills when personnel find themselves in mine-contaminated areas. The simulators are also used during the training of New Zealand Army Engineers to allow comprehensive tactical training in the breaching of anti-personnel minefields.

The New Zealand Army has found that current methods of simulation did not meet its training requirements. As a consequence, the Army initiated its own simulator development in a joint project with local industry, and after research failed to find that a suitable simulator device was available elsewhere. The simulator developed can be activated by pressure, pull, or by pressure release, and usually uses smoke or a sound simulator to indicate that the device has functioned. It is now ready for production and the Army is to purchase 400 of these simulator devices, for delivery in October, to meet its anti-personnel mine training requirements. The production of these training simulators is consistent with the obligations under the Ottawa Convention.

In addition, the New Zealand Army has a collection of about 50 inert mines brought back from various demining missions, which are used for pre-deployment training. These are free-from-explosive, and therefore do not qualify as anti-personnel mines as the term is defined by the Ottawa Convention.

New Zealand has found that by utilising models and simulators, it has been able to train its armed forces in the necessities of mine awareness. It has also been able to maintain a body of specialists who are well equipped to cope with demining in both humanitarian and tactical situations.